

In the Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) An acetabular inserter for aiding a surgeon in controlling the installation of a hip prosthesis, the inserter comprising:
 - a) an inserter head;
 - b) a housing attached to the inserter head, the housing having at least one bend permitting the housing to avoid anatomical structures or tissue during use in surgery and enclosing a drive train having, at a far end, a prosthesis engaging thread, and at the opposite end, a handle which facilitates turning of the drive train by the operator; and
 - c) a locking mechanism associated with the housing which selectively locks the drive train, and thus the prosthesis, in position, wherein further the opposite end of the drive train has a latch device which enables quick removal from the housing for cleaning and sterilization.
2. (Withdrawn and Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 1 wherein the drive train includes at least one u-joint located so as to transmit torque through a bend in the housing.
3. (Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 1, wherein the housing is C-shaped.

4. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) The acetabular inserter of claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism comprises a drive train having a threaded, prosthesis engaging tip, the drive train further including a lever link which is disposed in the housing ~~{12}~~ so as to rotate on a fulcrum, such that, actuation of the lever link draws the threaded tip into the housing and, when connected to a prosthesis, draws the prosthesis against an impaction surface, wherein sufficient friction may be generated therebetween to lock the prosthesis in place.

5. (Withdrawn and Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 4, wherein the link lever has a knob attached to its extreme end, the knob enabling a user to orient the tip.

6. (Withdrawn and Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 5, wherein a lockable, variable length link is attached between the link lever and the housing in order to permit a user to vary pressure that the tip can exert against the impaction head.

7. (Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 6, wherein the variable link is infinitely variable and unlockable via a latch in order to permit release of pressure on the prosthesis.

8. (Withdrawn and Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 7, wherein the prosthesis engaging tip is connected by way of a first U-joint to a lever which slides in a pivoting sleeve fixed to the housing via a first pivot.

9. (Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 1, wherein a one-way catch mechanism prevents a rod connected to the second lever from sliding out of the housing unless an unlock lever is activated.

10. (Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 1, wherein the inserter head is covered by an inserter head covering, made of a shock-absorbing material, in order to absorb the impact stresses incurred during use of the inserter.

11. (Previously Presented) An acetabular inserter of claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism is an expandable collet which a knob, adjacent the handle, expands when turned in one direction so as to lock the collet against a surface of a prosthesis in order to prevent the prosthesis from rotation, thus enabling the surgeon to pre-set and lock the position of the prosthesis prior to the installation thereof.

12. (Previously Presented) The inserter of claim 11, wherein the collet is comprises of two jaws having opposite ends pivoting on a fulcrum, one end of which being adapted to engage an interior surface of a prosthesis, the prosthesis engaging ends being drawn away from one another when a actuator piston, which passes through the fulcrum, is draw therebetween.

13. (Previously Presented) The inserter of claim 12, wherein the fulcrum is mounted in a cage through which the actuator piston passes, the actuator piston having a shoulder bearing against a surface of the cage opposite the prosthesis engaging ends of the jaws, such that, as the actuator piston is being activated to separate the prosthesis engaging ends of the jaws, a shoulder of the piston contacting the surface compresses the jaws into the cage, thereby drawing the jaws into the inserter and, when connected to a prosthesis, thereby drawing the prosthesis against an impaction surface, so as to firmly fix the prosthesis against the impaction surface.

14. (Previously Presented) The inserter of claim 13, wherein the collet is provided with external, three-dimensional structures which engage with corresponding structures on the prosthesis.

15. (Previously Presented) The inserter of claim 14, wherein the three dimensional structures are threads.

16. (Previously Presented) The inserter of claim 14, wherein the three-dimensional structures are grooves.

17. (Previously Presented) The inserter of claim 14, wherein the three-dimensional structures are divots.

18. (Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 11, wherein the drive train includes at least one u-joint located so as to transmit torque through a bend in the housing.

19. (Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 11, wherein the housing is C-shaped.

20. (Withdrawn and Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 1, wherein further, the locking mechanism is made up of a latch housing which is constrainable against rotation while being urged part-way into a recess toward the engagement end of an impactor head by a spring captured between the latch housing and a shaft of the drive train, the spring urging the latch housing against a cam stop when a trigger is positioned so as to selectively,

- i) enable the drive train to be turnable within the housing by the operator rotating the handle, the cam stop being connected to a shaft to which an actuator component is attached,
- ii) enable a user to turn the cam stop in a position to block further movement of the latch housing into the recess, such that when the cam stop is turned so that it does not block further entry of the latch housing into the recess, catches inside the latch housing are urged into engagement with serrations cut into the outer circumference of a component of the drive train, wherein the engagement of the catches into the serrations constrains the latch housing against rotational movement and locks the drive train against rotational movement, the selectivity enabling the surgeon to pre-set and lock the position of the prosthesis prior to the installation thereof, wherein the latch housing may be unlatched from the housing so as to enable quick and invention is easily cleanable.

21. (Previously Presented) The acetabular inserter of claim 1, wherein the housing is C-shaped in order to minimize the invasiveness of the surgery by better clearing anatomical structures and tissue.